

Message Text

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71

ACTION EUR-12

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NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 /072 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 274

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, EGEN, IT

SUBJECT: VANNI SEEMINGLY UNSEATED AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF UIL

REF: ROME 15247

1. SUMMARY. UIL SECRETARY GENERAL VANNI IS BEING CONFRONTED WITH A NEW MAJORITY CONSISTING OF SOCIALISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. IT IS THEIR APPARENT INTENTION TO REPLACE VANNI WITH GIORGIO BENVENUTO, CURRENTLY HEAD OF THE UIL METAL WORKERS UNION. FINAL DECISION WILL COME TODAY OR TOMORROW. ASSERTEDLY, THE SHIFT IN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC POSITION DERIVES FROM STRONG PRESSURE FROM THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY LEADERSHIP. END SUMMARY.

2. RAFFAELE VANNI, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE LAY LABOR CONFEDERATION UIL FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS AND A REPUBLICAN, HAS APPARENTLY BEEN OUSTED BY A NEW UIL MAJORITY CONSISTING OF THE SOCIALISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. THIS WOULD REPRESENT THE SUCCESSFUL CULMINATION OF SOCIALIST EFFORTS TO CAPTURE THE TOP UIL WHICH WERE LAUNCHED IN THEIR RECENT CAUCUS (MESSAGE UNDER REFERENCE). THIS TURN OF AFFAIRS HAS COME AS A SURPRISE TO MANY SINCE AS RECENTLY AS YESTERDAY THE
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SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WERE ASSURING VANNI THAT THEY WOULD NOT LEND

THEMSELVES TO EFFORTS TO UNSEAT HIM.

3. THE NEW SECRETARY GENERAL EVIDENTLY WILL BE GIORGIO BENVENUTO, 39, SOCIALIST, HERETOFORE SECRETARY GENERAL OF UIL'S METAL WORKERS UNION (UILM). THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WERE SAID TO BE DICKERING FOR THE TOP POST FOR THEMSELVES, BUT THE SOCIALISTS LET THEM UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION.

4. VANNI, CONFRONTED WITH 72 SIGNATURES ON A DOCUMENT PROCLAIMING A NEW SOCIALIST-SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY (THE TWO COMPONENTS COMMAND 79 OF THE 109 SEATS IN THE UIL CENTRAL COMMITTEE), HAS ANNOUNCED HE WILL OFFER HIS RESIGNATION "IF 51 PERCENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE IS OPPOSED TO MY CONTINUED LEADERSHIP". HE HAS FURTHER INDICATED HE WILL "GO INTO THE OPPOSITION" WITHIN UIL AS A NATIONAL SECRETARY AND A MEMBER OF THE UIL SECRETARIAT.

5. CONFIRMATION OF THESE EVENTS WILL PRESUMABLY COME LATER TODAY OR TOMORROW WHEN THE UIL CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WHICH INITIATED ITS MEETING YESTERDAY, WILL IN EFFECT ENTERTAIN A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN VANNI'S LEADERSHIP.

6. COMMENT. VANNI'S COMMENT ABOUT ACCEDING TO THE EXISTENCE OF A 51 PERCENT MAJORITY ALLUDES TO THE FACT THAT ACTUALLY A 60 PERCENT VOTE IS NECESSARY, UNDER UIL REGULATIONS, TO VALIDATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE DECISIONS. IN FACT, THE 60 PERCENT VOTE WOULD APPEAR TO BE IN HAND. THOUGH VANNI HAS WEATHERED NUMEROUS THREATS TO HIS PRECARIOUS STEWARDSHIP IN THE PAST, THE CURRENT THREAT APPEARS INSUPERABLE UNLESS THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS SHOULD EXPERIENCE A CHANGE OF HEART IN THE COURSE OF THE NEXT DAY OR TWO.

7. OUR SOURCES REPORT THAT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC DECISION IN UIL WAS MADE RELUCTANTLY UNDER VIGOROUS PRESSURE FROM PSDI PARTY HEADQUARTERS. EVIDENTLY, THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY IS INCLINING STRONGLY TOWARD RE-ASSOCIATING ITSELF CLOSELY WITH THE PSI. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE SOCIALIST INITIATIVE IN UIL HAS THE STRONG AND OVERT SUPPORT OF PSI SECRETARY CRAXI, THE UIL IS GIVING EVIDENCE OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE REASSERTED THEIR CONTROL OVER THE VARIOUS FACTIONS WITHIN THE ITALIAN LABOR MOVEMENT.

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8. FURTHER ANALYSIS WILL FOLLOW IN THE LIKELY EVENT THAT VANNI'S OUSTER IS CONFIRMED.VOLPE

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